

City of Alexandria, Virginia
Commission on Information Technology

MINUTES

August 9, 2010 Meeting

Meeting called to order at 6:15 PM

Members present: Nina Baliga, Daniel Brooks, Catherine Hogan, Kostas Liopiros, Deb Roepke (for Del Pepper), Lynda Rudd, Marie Schuler

Excused: Steve Cooper, Page Moon

Absent: Philip Acosta, Alicia Hughes, Helen Morris

City Staff present: Tom Trobridge

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the July 19 meeting were approved unanimously.

Commission Meeting Rules and Procedures

The Chair, Kostas Liopiros, recommended that the quorum for Commission meetings be established as a majority of the extant voting members. Since the Commission currently has 12 voting members, the quorum would be 7 members physically present during a meeting.

The Chair tasked the Vice Chair, Dan Brooks, to review City regulations and authoritative sources such as Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) and to prepare a Commission memorandum for the record establishing rules and procedures regarding quorums in the conduct of Commission meetings. The memorandum should address how many members are required to establish a quorum, whether Commission business can continue if subsequently a quorum is found not to exist and whether the physical presence of a member during a meeting is required to be included in a quorum.

Dan shall provide a draft memorandum to the Chair one week prior to the September 13 meeting.

Policy Recommendation on Broadband Internet Access

A revised draft of the broadband initiative, incorporating comments and edits from

Catherine Hogan, Page Moon and Kostas Liopiros, was circulated prior to the meeting.

Despite the importance of this initiative, City Council might view it as burdensome at a time of undue fiscal constraint. The Chair suggested that the memorandum more clearly define the role and contribution of the Commission in supporting the initiative. The Chair asked each member for suggested actions by the Commission to be included in an attachment to the memorandum. Members are requested to submit recommendations within one week -- by August 16.

There was unanimous agreement to proceed with the recommendation, which will be submitted for final Commission approval at the September meeting.

Public-Private Partnerships

Targeted public/private partnerships could be an effective way to increase the availability of affordable broadband and adoption of broadband in Alexandria. One example is the proposed National Cable and Telecommunications Association (NCTA) Adoption Plus (A+) pilot program to promote broadband adoption among middle school-aged children in low income households that do not currently receive broadband service. Comcast, as one of the cable broadband Internet Service Providers (ISPs) represented on the Board of Directors of the NCTA, has agreed to participate in the A+ program.

The Chair asked Marie Schuler to inform the Commission at the September meeting on the status of the A+ program in Alexandria and on other public/private partnerships in the Northern Virginia area involving cable operators, such as the agreement between Cox Communications and Fairfax County.

Working Group to Review the Recruitment Plan

During the May 10 meeting, the Chair established a working group to review the Commission's recruitment plan and to recommend any appropriate changes to improve the recruitment of members. The intent was to develop a tuned up recruitment plan for inclusion in the Commission's annual report. Steve Cooper chaired the working group with Bob Soltys assisting. The Chair encouraged the working group to consult with Dan Brooks, who as Vice Chair chairs the permanent Recruitment Committee, for his perspective and recommendations.

Recommendations on revising the recruitment plan were not ready for the July meeting and Bob Soltys resigned just prior to the meeting. The Chair then assigned Deb Roepke to replace Bob Soltys on the working group reporting to Steve. The Chair again asked the working group to consult with Dan Brooks and stressed the importance of developing a realistic and achievable recruitment plan.

The Chair scheduled a special meeting of the Commission for August 9 to review and consider any recommendations regarding the recruitment plan. This entailed a delay in

producing and delivering the annual report and the Chair so informed Rose Boyd, Executive Secretary for Boards and Commissions.

As of the August 9 meeting, recommendations to improve the plan were not brought forward to the Commission in time for inclusion in the annual report. The Chair therefore dissolved the working group and will proceed with the current recruitment plan for the coming year. The Chair directed that any proposed changes to the recruitment plan would be brought up later.

Recruitment Committee

The Chair assigned Deb Roepke to the permanent Recruitment Committee reporting to Dan Brooks. The Chair tasked Dan and Deb to give high priority to implementing the recruitment plan, starting with evaluating and recommending candidates to fill the current vacancy due to Bob Soltys' resignation. Applications are due Thursday, September 2, 2010 and will be considered at the next City Council meeting.

The Chair notes that only the Commission can make a recommendation to City Council regarding an appointment. Because of the timing of the submission of applications and the scheduling of City Council meetings, a special meeting of the Commission may have to be called. The Recruitment Committee should notify the Chair of a proposed date for a special meeting.

Commission Web Site

An attractive and informative web site is an important element of a recruitment plan. A web site can be used to advertise available positions and elaborate on the capabilities the Commission needs and requires from its members. A web site can be used to explain the Commission's activities and provide a repository of documents and reports relevant to the Commission's work. All this would be important in attracting and recruiting new members. The Commission has been talking about this for the past year with little progress.

The Chair tasked the Recruitment Committee to develop and present a plan for a web site that addresses the issues raised above. The plan should address the overall concept, design, hosting, programming support, maintenance and schedule of activities. This is a very high priority effort and will be on the agenda at the September meeting.

Nominations for Chair, Vice-chair and Secretary

Marie Schuler presented the slate of candidates for Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary for next fiscal year: Kostas Liopiros, Chairperson, Daniel Brooks, Vice Chairperson and Lynda Rudd, Secretary. The slate was unanimously approved and the candidates accepted their positions.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.